Forest Service **Gallatin National Forest** 

Supervisor's Office 10 East Babcock P.O. Box 130 Bozeman, MT 59771

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Updated 10/17/2011

## Hello:

In August of 2009 we, the Gallatin National Forest, proposed an amendment to our Land and Resource management Plan (Forest Plan) to remove or modify 58 goals and standards and sought public comment on that proposal. Shortly after comments were received the analysis process was suspended due to some unexpected events and changed circumstances. However, the primary need for amendment has remained. Given the likelihood that full revision is still a number of years off, there is a need to remove or correct outdated, ineffective or unnecessary direction from the Gallatin Forest Plan. Therefore we have revised the original amendment proposal to reflect new information that we've learned over the past 2 years and are resuming the analysis process. We are now providing an opportunity for public comment on this revised proposal.

The direction proposed for amendment is identified on the attachment to this letter along with the specific reasons for the change. This proposed amendment is being prepared in accordance with the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (RPA) as amended by the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA) and the implementing regulations at 36 CFR 219 (2000/1982). This direction is the basis for national forest land and resource management planning and is what guided the preparation of the Gallatin Forest Plan in 1987. It also contains provisions for amending and revising Forest Plans. The Gallatin National Forest does not expect to revise the Forest Plan for the next several years and because the Plan is now 24 years old, some of the provisions are outdated or are otherwise in need of correction. The proposed amendment is only designed to make the needed corrections and is not an attempt to change the underlying substance of the 1987 Forest Plan. The amendment will not eliminate the need to revisit various resource planning issues during the revision process.

The Responsible Official for this decision will be me, the Gallatin Forest Supervisor.

# **Providing Comments**

Comments provided on the original proposal in 2009 have and will continue to be considered in the decision process and they will remain part of the administrative record. Comments on the revised proposal will be accepted until November 14, 2011. To be most helpful, comments should be substantive and specific to the individual proposals being considered for amendment. They should include: (1) name, address, telephone number, and organization represented, if any; (2) title of the action (i.e. "Gallatin Clean-up Amendment"); (3) specific facts and supporting reasons for me to consider; and (4) signatures.





Written comments should be sent to:

Gallatin National Forest Attn: Steve Christiansen P.O. Box 130 Bozeman, MT 59771

Electronic comments can be e-mailed to: <u>r1 gallatin comments@fs.fed.us</u>. Enter the phrase "Clean-up Amendment" in the subject line. Comments may also be faxed to (406) 587-6758. If you have questions please contact Steve Christiansen at (406) 587-6750.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address.

Sincerely,

/s/Scott Barndt for MARY C. ERICKSON Forest Supervisor

# GALLATIN NATIONAL FOREST PROPOSED FOREST PLAN CLEAN-UP AMENDMENT

(Revised August 2011)

Item	Forest Plan	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
#	Page #			
1	II-1	Forest-wide Goal 6. Maintain and	Replace goal 6 with the following:	In reference to changing goal 6 even pristine habitats have a
		enhance fish habitat to provide for an	"Manage and restore aquatic	limit to the number of organisms they can support, and
		increased fish population.	habitats to sustain aquatic fully	circumstances also exist under which habitat conditions may
			functioning ecological systems and	be excellent but yet organism populations are limited by other
		Forest-wide Goal 7. Provide habitat for	native species diversity, as	factors such as disease or genetic conditions. However,
		viable populations of all indigenous	determined by the suitability and	populations and other desirable aquatic values can reach their
		wildlife species and for increasing	capability of those ecosystems, and	highest level if ecosystems are fully functioning.
		populations of big game animals.	to meet aquatic management goals	
			of Montana Fish, Wildlife and	In reference to changing goal 7, when the Forest Plan was
			Parks, and other agencies, and	written and signed, many big game herds had not reached full
			State water quality standards"	capacity for their hunting districts. At this time, many big
			1 3	game populations are abundant, and the State has set
			Replace goal 7 with the following:	population goals for these areas which don't necessarily call
			"Provide for diversity of plant and	for increases. Also, nationally it has been determined that it is
			animal communities based on the	more appropriate to emphasize ecosystem diversity and
			suitability and capability of the	sustainability rather than maintenance of the viability of
			specific land area in order to meet	individual populations. See the National Forest System Land
			overall multiple-use objectives".	Management Planning Rule (2000) at 36 CFR 219, including
			overall multiple-use objectives.	its transition provisions as amended in 2002 and 2003 and as
				clarified by interpretative rules issued in 2001 and 2004.
				ciarried by interpretative rules issued in 2001 and 2004.

Item #	Forest Plan Page #	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
2	II-16	Forest-wide Standard 4(2). Environmental analysis and project designs will detail how the range of visual quality objectives (VQO) identified for each Management Area in Chapter III will be utilized. If the VQO cannot be met the Forest Supervisor must approve the exemption in the decision notice.	Rewrite the standard to say: "Environmental analysis and project designs for landscape altering activities will be evaluated to determine if they are compatible with the assigned VQOs.  Landscape altering projects shall meet the assigned VQOs, or in locations where the existing situation does not meet the VQO, shall not further degrade the visual condition."	In areas where landscape-modifying activities pre-dated the Forest Plan and where those actions created conditions not consistent with the assigned Forest Plan VQOs, a site-specific amendment has been necessary for proposed projects that have no effect or even a beneficial effect on visual quality. The proposed amendment would make the standard applicable only to the effects of a proposed project.
3	II-18	Forest-wide Standard 6(a)(3). Big game winter range will be managed to meet the forage and cover needs of deer, elk, moose, and other big game species in coordination with other uses. Habitat for deer and elk will be managed to provide for slight increases in populations.	Reword this standard to say "Big game habitat (summer and winter range) will be managed to meet the forage and cover needs of big game species in coordination with other uses."	Providing for slight increases in deer and elk populations is no longer appropriate because many MFWP herd goals are no longer for herd increases. Also, since there are numerous big game species on the Forest, the emphasis should not be only on deer and elk.
4	II-18	Forest-wide Standard 6(a)6. Allotment management plans will coordinate livestock grazing use with big game habitat needs.	Reword as "Allotment management plans will coordinate livestock grazing use with fish and wildlife habitat needs."	It is more appropriate for allotment management plans to coordinate grazing use with all fish and wildlife habitat needs rather than only focusing on big game.
5	II-18	Forest-wide Standard 6(a)7. Standards for snag management and for dead and down woody material will be utilized. These standards are detailed in Appendix A-1.	Rewrite this to refer to Forest Plan Amendment 15. i.e. "Standards for snag management and for dead and down woody material will be utilized. These standards are detailed in Gallatin Forest Plan Amendment 15."	Snag management direction was amended in 1993 and Appendix A within the Plan document is therefore no longer applicable.

Item #	Forest Plan Page #	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
6	II-18	Forest-wide Standard 6(a)10. Habitat component mapping and analysis will be applied to the management of important wildlife concentration areas such as the Bridger deer range, North Yellowstone elk range, Upper Gallatin elk range, Sheep-Mile big game range, and the Porcupine-Buffalo Horn and Cabin Creek areas.	Delete this standard.	Specific procedural direction is proposed to be removed from the Forest Plan because preferred analysis procedures change over time. Also provisions for key habitats are addressed in Standards #5 and #8 (FP, p. II-18). Lastly biological analyses of habitat are not confined to big game range.
7	II-18	Forest-wide Standard 6(a)12. Habitat that is essential for species identified in the Sensitive Species list developed for the Northern Region will be managed to maintain these species. These species include: Trumpeter Swan, Westslope and Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout, Western Big Eared Bat, Spotted Bat, Ferruginous Hawk, Harlequin Duck, Boreal Owl, and Common Loon.	Reword as: "Habitat for Regionally designated sensitive species on the Gallatin NF will be maintained in a suitable condition to support these species"	Delete listing of individual species because these change periodically, and several of these species are no longer on our sensitive species list while others have been added. The intent of the standard is to manage and maintain current sensitive species.

Item #	Forest Plan Page #	<b>Existing Forest 1</b>	Plan Direction	Proposed Ame	endment	Rationale
8	II-18		s,' which have been		species,' which	This proposal clarifies the purpose of each indicator species.  Due to changes in the listings of bald eagle and grizzly bear
		Forest manageme monitored to dete	tely to be affected by ent activities, will be	groups whose he to be affected be management as	ctivities, will be	under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) these species are identified as indicators of habitat for threatened, endangered or sensitive (TES) species. Elk remains as an indicator for big game habitat. For coldwater aquatic habitats, wild trout (all
		change.  SPECIES	INDICATIVE OF	change.  SPECIES	INDICATIVE	species included) remains listed by the Plan as indicator species. Wild trout are trout which maintain their populations through natural reproduction. The word "dependent" for goshawk and marten is replaced with the word "related" as
		Grizzly Bear Bald Eagle Elk Wild Trout Goshawk  Marten	threatened species endangered species Big game species Coldwater fisheries Old growth dependent species, dry Douglas fir sites. Old growth dependent species,	Grizzly Bear Bald Eagle Elk Wild Trout Goshawk	OF TES species TES species Big game species Coldwater fisheries Mature Forest related species,	this is more biologically accurate. The word "Pine" is added in front of "Marten" as the correct name for the species. The specificity (or limitation) of goshawk as an indicator of old growth on dry Douglas fir sites and pine marten as an indicator of old growth on moist spruce sites was dropped because their utility as an indicator goes beyond just those sites and they were not restricted to old growth forest.
9	II-19	Forest-wide Star	moist spruce sites.	Pine Marten Reword as:	Mature Forest related species,	Although this standard is redundant to Endangered Species
	H-17	biological evaluar prior to implement have potential to endangered speci with the U.S. Fish	tion will be completed nation of activities that effect threatened and es. Formal consultation and Wildlife Service I if a "may affect is	"1. A biological be completed primplementation have potential and endangered consultation with Wildlife Service if a "may affect"	al assessment will prior to a of activities that to affect threatened dispecies. Formal ith the U.S. Fish and we will be completed t, likely to adversely nation is made."	Act (ESA) requirements, we're simply proposing to correct terminology at this time. A "biological assessment" is the appropriate document to prepare to address the requirements of ESA. A "biological evaluation" is used for Forest Service sensitive species. Also, it clarifies that formal consultation occurs when the determination is "likely to adversely affect."

Item #	Forest Plan Page #	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
10	II-19	Forest-wide Standard 6(b)2. The grizzly bear standards and guidelines (Appendix G) will be followed in maintaining and improving habitat, minimizing human/grizzly bear conflict potential, and in guiding resource management activities.	Replace the standard at left with: "The most current, scientifically supported direction for grizzly bears will be followed in maintaining or improving habitat, minimizing human/grizzly bear conflict potential, and in guiding resource management activities."	There was an amendment to the Forest Plan, The Forest Plan Amendment for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation in the GYA' (2007), i.e. Amendment 27, which, at the time, replaced the original grizzly bear direction in the Forest Plan. This direction became effective upon the delisting of the bear as a "threatened" species on March 29, 2007. On September 21, 2009, the delisting decision was vacated. While the Court found, in part that the Conservation Strategy and thus the Forest Plan Amendments adopting it were inadequate regulatory mechanisms, it remains the best available science and superior management guidance to the previous Forest Plan direction. Thus, it is desirable and timely to remove standards that would compel management in a way that differs from the Conservation Strategy.
11	II-19	Forest-wide Standard 6(b)3. General management direction for bald eagle habitat is provided in "A Bald Eagle Management Plan for the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem."	Delete this standard.	This species is no longer listed under the Endangered Species Act and has become a sensitive species on the Forest. As a sensitive species, it will be managed under Wildlife and Fish Standard #12 (see item #7 above). Also, there is additional direction that applies to management of bald eagle such as the National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines (2007) and Montana Bald Eagle Management Plan Update (2010). Since direction changes periodically it is most appropriate that the Forest Plan not include requirements to follow specific plans.
12	II-19	Forest-wide Standard 6(b)4. Reestablishment programs for threatened and endangered species will be evaluated and coordinated with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and where applicable, Yellowstone National Park.	Reword this standard to say: "Reestablishment programs for threatened and endangered species will be evaluated and coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, and where applicable, Yellowstone National Park."	It is more appropriate to list the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Servifirst since they are the agency, through the Secretary of the Interior, responsible for determining endangered and threatened species and implementing and enforcing other provisions of the Endangered Species Act.

Item #	Forest Plan Page #	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
13	II-19	Forest-wide Standard 6(b)5. When the Greater Yellowstone Area Grizzly Bear Cumulative Effects Analysis Process becomes operational, it will be used as one of many tools to quantify habitat effectiveness and mortality risk forecasting for current and future foreseeable land use activities in designated bear management units on the Forest. (See Planning Records).	Replace with: "The most current, scientifically supported analysis tools to quantify the effects of management activities on grizzly bears will be used."	There was an amendment to the Forest Plan, The Forest Plan Amendment for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation in the GYA' (2007), i.e. Amendment 27, which, at the time, replaced the original grizzly bear direction in the Forest Plan. This direction became effective upon the delisting of the bear as a "threatened" species on March 29, 2007. On September 21, 2009, the delisting decision was vacated. While the Court found, in part that the Conservation Strategy and thus the Forest Plan Amendments adopting it were inadequate regulatory mechanisms, it remains the best available science and superior management guidance to the previous Forest Plan direction. Thus, it is desirable and timely to remove standards that would compel management in a way that differs from the Conservation Strategy.
14	II-19	Forest-wide Standard 6(b)6. The peregrine falcon reintroduction program will be continued with the cooperating agencies and private organizations.	Delete this standard.	Peregrine falcon is now a recovered and delisted species. The population is growing and therefore there is no need for a reintroduction program. It is now a sensitive species and is covered under Wildlife and Fish Standard #12 (see item #9 above).

Item "	Forest Plan	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
15	Page # II-20	Forest-wide Standard 6(c)2. In order to achieve size and age diversity of vegetation, the Forest will strive to develop the following successional stages in timber compartments containing suitable timber:    Successional   Minimum   Stage   % of Area   Area   Grass-forb   10   Seedlings   10   Saplings   10   Pole   10   Mature   10   Old Growth   10	Replace this standard as follows: "Use fire and other management tools to help achieve vegetative size and age class diversity. In part, to achieve this vegetative diversity, strive to maintain a minimum 10% old growth forest on lands classified as forested at the mountain range scale. Old Growth Forest: Forested stands that generally originated at least over 120 years ago (depending on the forest type and location). See: Green, P. et al., April, 1992. Old Growth Forest Types of the Northern Region. USDA, Forest Service, Northern	The original intent of this standard was to provide a diverse landscape. This standard is actually physically impossible to impose on a landscape due to succession occurring quickly in the younger age classes. It would lead to frequent harvest to retain the younger age classes. The vegetation of most concern for adequate representation is old growth. Also, the scale of the timber compartment is not a good scale upon which to measure this standard. The mountain range is the scale adopted as a standard because of data reliability and it makes logical sense in assessing habitat diversity across the landscape. Assessing old growth at other scales may be appropriate in certain situations.
16	II-20	Forest-wide Standard 7(4). Domestic sheep will not be reintroduced to vacant allotments in grizzly bear MS-1 areas.	Region, Missoula MT."  Replace with: "Domestic sheep will not be reintroduced to vacant allotments in occupied grizzly bear habitat."	It is undesirable to have domestic sheep anywhere within occupied grizzly bear habitat, not just MS-1 areas.
17	II-21	Forest-wide Standard 8(b)3. Standing snags will be provided for dependent wildlife species. (See Appendix A-1 for more specific direction.)	Rewrite this standard as follows:  "3. Standing snags will be provided for dependent wildlife species. (See Forest Plan Amendment 15 for more specific direction.)"	The Forest Plan was amended in 1993 by Amendment No. 15 on Snag Management Direction. This replaced Appendix A-1 direction for snags and down woody debris.
18	II-21	Forest-wide Standard 6(b)4. Suitable habitat will be provided for wildlife species dependent on dead and down woody debris. (See Appendix A-1 for more specific direction.)	Rewrite this standard as follows:  "4. Maintain sufficient down woody debris habitat components to accommodate the needs of wildlife species. (See Forest Plan Amendment 15 for more specific direction.)"	The Forest Plan was amended in 1993 by Amendment No. 15 on Snag Management Direction. This replaced Appendix A-1 direction for snags and down woody debris.

Item #	Forest Plan Page #	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
19	II-23	Forest-wide Standard 8(j)1. "Existing wild stands may be harvested or thinned for posts, poles, or other unregulated products in all management areas where timber product removal is allowed."	Change this standard to read: "Existing unmanaged stands may be harvested or thinned for products consistent with the most current applicable management direction for lynx"	The existing Forest Plan standard is not consistent with direction in the Northern Rockies Lynx Management Direction FEIS (aka Lynx Amendment) regarding thinning in snowshoe hare habitat.
20	II-23	Forest-wide Standard 9. "The Forest will cooperate with the Montana Air Quality Bureau in the State Implementation Plan (SIP). The requirements of the SIP and Montana Smoke Management Plan will be met."	Change "Air Quality Bureau" to "Montana Department of Environmental Quality."	This corrects the name of the agency responsible for air quality.
21	II-23	Forest-wide Standard 10(2). Best management practices (BMPs) will be used on all Forest watersheds in the planning and implementation of project activities (see Appendix C and Planning Records – 'Watershed Management Guidelines for the Gallatin National Forest').	Change this standard as follows: "Current" best management practices (BMPs) will be used on all Forest watersheds in the planning and implementation of project activities.	Applicable BMPs have and do change over time. The current standard locks us into a BMP list that is now over 20 years old and out of date. By adding the word "current" BMPs and deleting the reference to App. C, the proposal will only require that current BMPs be used.
22	II-24	Forest-wide Standard 10(10). In municipal watersheds, such as Bozeman, Hyalite, and Lyman Creek drainages, all project activities will be implemented to ensure State water quality standards are met. Coordination with City of Bozeman officials and the State Water Quality Bureau will be done throughout the project planning process.	Change "Water Quality Bureau" to "Montana Department of Environmental Quality."	This corrects the name of the agency responsible for water quality.
23	II-25	Forest-wide Standard 12(a)1. Landownership adjustments will be considered only where analysis indicates a change is needed to respond to major public issues, management concerns, or National Forest management objectives.	Rewrite this standard as follows: "Landownership adjustments will be considered to respond to major public issues, management concerns, or National Forest management objectives."	The phrase in the current standard "only where analysis indicates a change is needed" is unnecessary. It implies that some process must be gone through to determine if an adjustment in landownership is "responsive" to major public issues, etc. There is no such specified process.

Item	Forest Plan	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
#	Page #			
24	II-25	Forest-wide Standard 12(a)2. The	Delete this standard.	This statement was made in the Forest Plan as a prediction of
		current pattern of intermingled		what was likely to occur in lands management over the
		ownership will generally be continued.		planning period. In reality there have been more opportunities
		An exception to this is the proposed		to consolidate land ownership than was anticipated. Therefore
		exchange of Gallatin National Forest		the management concept for this standard is outdated.
		lands for Burlington Northern Railroad		Landownership adjustments are also adequately addressed by
		lands located in the Porcupine and South		the standard identified in Item 25 above.
		Cottonwood drainages of the Gallatin		
		Range.		

Item	Forest Plan	Existing Forest Plan Direction	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
#	Page #			
25	II-27	Forest-wide Standard 12(c). "Special Use Applications will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The principle criteria used to evaluate special use applications will be:  1. Applications for uses that conform to	Replace this standard with the following statement: "Special Use proposals will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Preference will be given to specialuse proposals that offer service or benefit to the public over single-	Changing the word "applications" in the standard to "proposals", matches today's terminology. The remainder of the current direction is already in the Forest Service Manual and Handbook and therefore is not needed in the Forest Plan.
		the Forest Plan may be granted.  2. Applications for private use of	purpose or private uses."	
		National Forest land will not be granted if location and development of non-National Forest land is reasonably possible.		
		3. Special-use authorizations that primarily afford the applicant a lower cost or less restrictive location or merely accommodate the applicant's wishes will not be granted.		
		4. Preference will be given to special- use applications that offer service or benefit to the public over single-purpose or private uses.		
		5. Applications for utility corridors will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The FEIS, Chapter IV, discusses a process used to evaluate potential corridors.		

Item #	Forest Plan Page #	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
26	MA1 III-2	Description of Management Area (MA)1. "These areas include all developed campgrounds, picnic areas, boat ramps, and visitor information sites plus potential developed sites."	Add "recreation residence tracts" and "rental cabins" to this statement and modify it so as not to exclude any developed sites. Word it as follows: "These areas include all developed recreation sites such as: campgrounds, picnic areas, boat ramps, visitor information sites, recreation residence tracts, and recreation rental cabins."	This simply corrects what likely was an oversight in the Forest Plan. Recreation residence tracts are appropriate for MA 1 designation.
27	MA1 III-2 MA2 III-4 MA5 III-14	MA Standard for Wildlife and Fish.  "Manage developed sites in occupied grizzly bear habitat to minimize the potential for human/grizzly bear confrontation. Follow the standards set out in the grizzly bear guidelines (Appendix G)."	Replace this standard with:  "Manage developed sites in occupied grizzly bear habitat to minimize the potential for human/grizzly bear confrontation. Follow the most current scientifically supported direction applicable to the management of grizzly bear habitat."	There was an amendment to the Forest Plan, The Forest Plan Amendment for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation in the GYA' (2007), i.e. Amendment 27, which, at the time, replaced the original grizzly bear direction in the Forest Plan. This direction became effective upon the delisting of the bear as a "threatened" species on March 29, 2007. On September 21, 2009, the delisting decision was vacated. While the Court found, in part that the Conservation Strategy and thus the Forest Plan Amendments adopting it were inadequate regulatory mechanisms, it remains the best available science and superior management guidance to the previous Forest Plan direction. Thus, it is desirable and timely to remove standards that would compel management in a way that differs from the Conservation Strategy.

Item	Forest Plan	Existing Forest Plan Direction	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
28	Page #  III-3 III-16 III-36 III39 III46 III-53 III-58 III-61	Schedule of Management Practices WILDLIFE  Habitat Improvement  1st decade – XX structures or acres  2nd decade – XX structures or acres	Delete this section of the schedule of management practices.	Since the Forest Plan is now over 20 years old, management practices for the 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> decade are no longer relevant.
	III-16 III-43 III-49 III-58 III-61	T&E Habitat Improvement  1 <sup>st</sup> decade – XX structures or acres  2 <sup>nd</sup> decade – XX structures or acres		
29	MA4 III-10	Description of Management Area 4. These areas include the Gallatin National Forest portions of the Absaroka- Beartooth and the Lee Metcalf Wildernesses, plus the Lionhead and Republic Mountain recommended Wildernesses. Occupied grizzly bear habitat is present in much of the area.	Replace the last sentence with "Grizzly bears inhabit these areas."	When the Forest Plan was written, "occupied" grizzly bear habitat was synonymous with the Recovery Zone. As the grizzly bear population has expanded well outside of the Recovery Zone (now Primary Conservation Area or PCA), the original meaning of the term "occupied" has become outdated. We now would rather state that grizzly bears inhabit areas of the Forest, and can be found almost anywhere south of I-90 on the Forest.
30	MA4 III-10	MA Goal #3. Manage activities within grizzly bear habitat for the recovery of the grizzly bear.	Rewrite this goal as follows: "Manage activities within grizzly bear habitat for the continued recovery of the grizzly bear. Follow the most current scientifically supported direction applicable to the management of grizzly bear habitat."	The grizzly bear in the Greater Yellowstone Area was determined to be recovered and was delisted in 2007. Even though the delisting decision was overturned in court, the population is still considered to be recovered.

Item #	Forest Plan Page #	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
31	MA4 III-11	Standard for Wildlife and Fish. Application of management standards in Appendix G within occupied grizzly bear habitat must be consistent with Forest Service Wilderness policy.	Delete this standard.	There was an amendment to the Forest Plan, The Forest Plan Amendment for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation in the GYA' (2007), i.e. Amendment 27, which, at the time, replaced the original grizzly bear direction in the Forest Plan. This direction became effective upon the delisting of the bear as a "threatened" species on March 29, 2007. On September 21, 2009, the delisting decision was vacated. While the Court found, in part that the Conservation Strategy and thus the Forest Plan Amendments adopting it were inadequate regulatory mechanisms, it remains the best available science and superior management guidance to the previous Forest Plan direction. Thus, it is desirable and timely to remove standards that would compel management in a way that differs from the Conservation Strategy.
32	MA4 III-11 MA5 III-15	Standard for Range. Grazing use within occupied grizzly bear habitat will be guided by the directions in the grizzly bear guidelines (Appendix G)	Replace with "Grazing use on the Forest where grizzly bears occur will be guided by the most current scientifically supported direction applicable to the management of grizzly bear habitat."	There was an amendment to the Forest Plan, The Forest Plan Amendment for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation in the GYA' (2007), i.e. Amendment 27, which, at the time, replaced the original grizzly bear direction in the Forest Plan. This direction became effective upon the delisting of the bear as a "threatened" species on March 29, 2007. On September 21, 2009, the delisting decision was vacated. While the Court found, in part that the Conservation Strategy and thus the Forest Plan Amendments adopting it were inadequate regulatory mechanisms, it remains the best available science and superior management guidance to the previous Forest Plan direction. Thus, it is desirable and timely to remove standards that would compel management in a way that differs from the Conservation Strategy.

Item #	Forest Plan Page #	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
33	MA7 III-20	Standard for Wildlife and Fish. In occupied grizzly bear habitat, utilize the guidelines (Appendix G) for maintenance and enhancement of natural food sources and security cover.	Replace with: "In occupied grizzly bear habitat, utilize the most current direction for maintenance and enhancement of natural food sources and security cover."	There was an amendment to the Forest Plan, The Forest Plan Amendment for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation in the GYA' (2007), i.e. Amendment 27, which, at the time, replaced the original grizzly bear direction in the Forest Plan. This direction became effective upon the delisting of the bear as a "threatened" species on March 29, 2007. On September 21, 2009, the delisting decision was vacated. While the Court found, in part that the Conservation Strategy and thus the Forest Plan Amendments adopting it were inadequate regulatory mechanisms, it remains the best available science and superior management guidance to the previous Forest Plan direction. Thus, it is desirable and timely to remove standards that would compel management in a way that differs from the Conservation Strategy.
34	MA7 III-20	Standard for Wildlife and Fish. "Maintain and enhance traditional bald eagle feeding areas."	Change this standard to read: "Maintain and enhance bald eagle foraging areas around known nest sites"	Bald eagles have been de-listed and are now managed as Forest Service sensitive species. The word "traditional" is overbroad; known feeding areas are primarily associated with occupied nest sites. Protective measures around nest locations are compatible with National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines (USFWS, 2007).
35	MA11 III-33	Standard for Wildlife and Fish. Resource area analysis will identify vegetative characteristics and habitat effectiveness for featured species.	Delete this standard.	Resource area analysis is an outdated practice and the Forest Plan should not include procedural direction. Also, "habitat effectiveness" refers to a standard that has been removed from the Forest Plan (see rationale for item 37 above).
36	MA13 III-40	Description of Management Area (MA)13. This management area consists of forested, occupied grizzly bear habitat. The productive Forest lands are available for timber harvest provided grizzly bear habitat objectives are met.	Delete the word "occupied" from the first sentence.	When the Forest Plan was written, "occupied" grizzly bear habitat was synonymous with the Recovery Zone. As the grizzly bear population has expanded well outside of the Recovery Zone (now Primary Conservation Area or PCA), the original meaning of the term "occupied" has become outdated. It is preferable to recognize that grizzly bears inhabit areas of the Forest, and can be found almost anywhere south of I-90.

Item	Forest Plan	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
37	MA13 III-40	Management Area Goal 1. Manage vegetation to provide habitat necessary to recover the grizzly bear.	Restate as "Manage vegetation to provide habitat necessary for the continued recovery of the grizzly bear."	The grizzly bear is currently considered to be "recovered" even though it remains listed under the Endangered Species Act as a "threatened" species.
38	MA13 III-40	Standard for Wildlife and Fish. Resource area analysis will identify vegetative characteristic and habitat effectiveness for the grizzly bear.	Delete this standard.	Resource area analysis is an outdated practice and the Forest Plan should not include procedural direction. There was an amendment to the Forest Plan, The Forest Plan Amendment for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation in the GYA' (2007), i.e. Amendment 27, which, at the time, replaced the original grizzly bear direction in the Forest Plan. This direction became effective upon the delisting of the bear as a "threatened" species on March 29, 2007. On September 21, 2009, the delisting decision was vacated. While the Court found, in part that the Conservation Strategy and thus the Forest Plan Amendments adopting it were inadequate regulatory mechanisms, it remains the best available science and superior management guidance to the previous Forest Plan direction. Thus, it is desirable and timely to remove standards that would compel management (or analysis) in a way that differs from the Conservation Strategy.

Item #	Forest Plan Page #	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
39	MA13 III-41 MA14 III-45 MA15 III-48 MA19 III-57	MA Standard for Wildlife and Fish. The cumulative effects analysis process and grizzly bear guidelines (Appendix G) will provide the basis for managing other resource uses.	Replace with: "The most current scientifically supported direction and analysis tools applicable to the management of grizzly bear habitat will provide the basis for managing other resource uses."	There was an amendment to the Forest Plan, The Forest Plan Amendment for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation in the GYA' (2007), i.e. Amendment 27, which, at the time, replaced the original grizzly bear direction in the Forest Plan. This direction became effective upon the delisting of the bear as a "threatened" species on March 29, 2007. On September 21, 2009, the delisting decision was vacated. While the Court found, in part that the Conservation Strategy and thus the Forest Plan Amendments adopting it were inadequate regulatory mechanisms, it remains the best available science and superior management guidance to the previous Forest Plan direction. Thus, it is desirable and timely to remove standards that would compel management in a way that differs from the Conservation Strategy.
40	MA13 III-41	MA Standard for Timber. As site specific timber sales are scheduled and designed, the criteria developed in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and found in Appendix H: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Biological Opinion, will be used. Informal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on these criteria will occur before any site specific project is implemented.	Delete this standard.	Consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service is required. There is no need for this standard in the Forest Plan.
41	MA14 III-44	Management Area (MA)14 Description. These areas consist of big game winter ranges located in either open grasslands or a mosaic of grasslands and forested habitats. They are located within occupied grizzly bear habitat.	Delete the word "occupied" from the second sentence.	When the Forest Plan was written, "occupied" grizzly bear habitat was synonymous with the Recovery Zone. As the grizzly bear population has expanded well outside of the Recovery Zone (now Primary Conservation Area or PCA), the original meaning of the term "occupied" has become outdated. It is preferable to recognize that grizzly bears inhabit areas of the Forest, and can be found almost anywhere south of I-90.

Item #	Forest Plan Page #	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
42	MA14 (III-45) MA15 (III-48)	Standard for Minerals. Limit mineral activities to specific areas or periods to reduce grizzly bear mortality risk and maintain elk habitat effectiveness.	Reword as follows: "Limit mineral activities to specific areas or periods to reduce grizzly bear mortality risk and maintain elk habitat quality."	The term "elk habitat effectiveness" could be interpreted to tie to a former road density standard that was removed from the Forest Plan by the Gallatin National Forest Travel Management Plan which is not the intent. Changing the word "effectiveness" to "quality" clarifies this standard.
43	MA15 III-47	Management Area (MA)15 Description. These areas consist of open grasslands or a mosaic of grasslands or steep rocky slopes interspersed with timber which are located in occupied grizzly bear habitat (Management Situation 1 and 2) and provide for dispersed recreation and livestock use.	Delete the word "occupied" and "(Management Situation 1 and 2)" from this description.	When the Forest Plan was written, "occupied" grizzly bear habitat was synonymous with the Recovery Zone. As the grizzly bear population has expanded well outside of the Recovery Zone (now Primary Conservation Area or PCA), the original meaning of the term "occupied" has become outdated. It is preferable to recognize that grizzly bears inhabit areas of the Forest, and can be found almost anywhere south of I-90.
44	MA15 III-47	Management Area Goal 2. Manage vegetation to provide habitat necessary to recover the grizzly bear."	Modify this goal to read: "2. Manage vegetation to provide habitat necessary for the continued recovery of the grizzly bear."	The grizzly bear is currently considered to be "recovered" even though it remains listed under the Endangered Species Act as a "threatened" species.
45	MA19 III-56	"Management goals for MA 19 are:  3. Manage vegetation to provide habitat necessary to recover the grizzly bear."	Restate as "Manage vegetation to provide habitat necessary for the continued recovery of the grizzly bear."	The grizzly bear is currently considered to be "recovered" even though it remains listed under the Endangered Species Act as a "threatened" species.
46	MA19 III-57	Standard for Wildlife and Fish. "Conduct habitat component mapping and analysis for featured species."	Delete this standard.	Specific procedural direction is being removed from the Forest Plan because the preferred procedures change over time. Key habitats are accounted for in Standards #5 and #8 (Forest Plan, p. II-18). Also there is no active management in the Hyalite/Porcupine-Buffalo Horn Wilderness Study Area where MA 19 is located.

Item #	Forest Plan Page #	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
47	MA19 III-57	Standard for Wildlife and Fish. Conduct management activities in accordance with the grizzly bear guidelines (Appendix G).	Replace with: "Conduct management activities in accordance with the most current scientifically supported direction and analysis tools applicable to the management of grizzly bear habitat."	There was an amendment to the Forest Plan, The Forest Plan Amendment for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation in the GYA' (2007), i.e. Amendment 27, which, at the time, replaced the original grizzly bear direction in the Forest Plan. This direction became effective upon the delisting of the bear as a "threatened" species on March 29, 2007. On September 21, 2009, the delisting decision was vacated. While the Court found, in part that the Conservation Strategy and thus the Forest Plan Amendments adopting it were inadequate regulatory mechanisms, it remains the best available science and superior management guidance to the previous Forest Plan direction. Thus, it is desirable and timely to remove standards that would compel management in a way that differs from the Conservation Strategy.
48	MA20 III-60	Standard for Wildlife and Fish. Use habitat component mapping analysis to help identify most logical areas for habitat work.	Replace with: "Use best available analysis tools to propose areas for habitat improvement work."	There was an amendment to the Forest Plan, The Forest Plan Amendment for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation in the GYA' (2007), i.e. Amendment 27, which, at the time, replaced the original grizzly bear direction in the Forest Plan. This direction became effective upon the delisting of the bear as a "threatened" species on March 29, 2007. On September 21, 2009, the delisting decision was vacated. While the Court found, in part that the Conservation Strategy and thus the Forest Plan Amendments adopting it were inadequate regulatory mechanisms, it remains the best available science and superior management guidance to the previous Forest Plan direction. Thus, it is desirable and timely to remove standards that would compel management in a way that differs from the Conservation Strategy.

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49	MA20 III-60	Standard for Range. Livestock grazing will be consistent with big game and grizzly bear management goals.	Delete this standard.	There was an amendment to the Forest Plan, The Forest Plan Amendment for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation in the GYA' (2007), i.e. Amendment 27, which, at the time, replaced the original grizzly bear direction in the Forest Plan. This direction became effective upon the delisting of the bear as a "threatened" species on March 29, 2007. On September 21, 2009, the delisting decision was vacated. While the Court found, in part that the Conservation Strategy and thus the Forest Plan Amendments adopting it were inadequate regulatory mechanisms, it remains the best available science and superior management guidance to the previous Forest Plan direction. Thus, it is desirable and timely to remove standards that might compel management in a way that differs from the Conservation Strategy.
50	C-1	APPENDIX C: WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT	Delete this appendix.	The 1987 "Watershed Management Guidelines for the Gallatin National Forest" are out of date and have been procedurally replaced by the Montana SMZ rules, Montana Forestry BMPs, Travel Plan standards, TMDL requirements, R1R4 BMP handbook (under revision), and other NEPA and Montana DEQ direction. In addition the "Guidelines" use out of date sediment analysis methods, standards (concentration in mg/L), and ECA water yield methodology.
51	MA11(pg. III-35), MA13 (pg. III-41)	<b>Standard for Timber.</b> "No commercial thinning is planned."	Drop this statement.	This is just a statement and doesn't provide direction. The reason this statement is here was just to indicate that commercial thinning was not planned as a contributor to the allowable sale quantity (ASQ).

Item	Forest Plan	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
52	MA5(pg. III-15, MA8(pg. III-25), MA9 (pg. III-28), MA10 (pg. III-31), MA11 (pg. III-34), MA13 (pg. III-34), MAI3 (pg. III-34),	Standard for Timber. "Include evenaged and uneven-aged harvest method systems."	Add "intermediate" systems.	Intermediate harvest systems need to be added to reflect the thinning activity we currently do for fuels reduction.
53	III-41). Unsuitable MAs including: MA1 through MA4, MA6, MA14 through MA21, MA25, MA26	Standard for Timber. "Harvest of post and pole and other wood products can take place adjacent to existing roads."	Delete this statement.	The definition of unregulated harvest allows for the removal of products in unsuitable MAs.

Item	Forest Plan	<b>Existing Forest Plan Direction</b>	Proposed Amendment	Rationale
#	Page #			
54	Unsuitable MAs including: MA1 through MA4, MA6, MA14 through MA21, MA25, MA26	Definition of "Unregulated Harvest" from the Glossary (page VI-42). "This harvest is not charged against the allowable sale quantity. It includes occasional volumes removed that were not recognized in calculations of the allowable sale quantity, such as cull or dead material and noncommercial species and products. It also includes all volume removed from unsuitable areas. Harvests from unsuitable areas will be programmed as needed to meet multiple use objectives other than timber production and for improvement of administrative sites.	Repeat the definition of "unregulated harvest" from the Forest Plan glossary in each of the unsuitable MAs.	By including the definition of "unregulated harvest" in each of the unsuitable management areas, it clarifies that lands identified as "unsuitable for timber management" does not mean that timber harvest is prohibited under the Forest Plan.
55	FP App. G and H, Amendment 19	These two appendices and Forest Plan Amendment 19 have provided management direction for the recovery of the grizzly bear for the last 15 to 24 years. This direction is too lengthy to include here. A copy of the Gallatin Forest Plan can be viewed on the "Planning" page of the Gallatin Forest website at "www.fs.fed.us/r1/gallatin". A copy of Amendment 19 is attached to this document.	Remove Amendment 19, Appendix G and H.	There was an amendment to the Forest Plan, The Forest Plan Amendment for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation in the GYA' (2007), i.e. Amendment 27, which, at the time, replaced the original grizzly bear direction in the Forest Plan. This direction became effective upon the delisting of the bear as a "threatened" species on March 29, 2007. On September 21, 2009, the delisting decision was vacated. While the Court found, in part that the Conservation Strategy and thus the Forest Plan Amendments adopting it were inadequate regulatory mechanisms, it remains the best available science and superior management guidance to the previous Forest Plan direction. Thus, it is desirable and timely to remove standards that might compel management in a way that differs from the Conservation Strategy.

#### Gallatin National Forest Forest Plan

## February 1996

Amendment No. 19 Access Direction for Grizzly Bear Recovery Zone

The Gallatin National Forest Plan is hereby amended as follows:

Delete the existing wording for road density occurring in the Forest Plan Appendix G, p.G-13, part 6.A.; p. G-22, part 7.A., Direction for Management Area 13, (Forest Plan p. III-42), second sentence under Facilities; Direction for Management Area 14, (Forest Plan p. III-46), last sentence under facilities; and Direction for Management Area 15 (Forest Plan p.III-48) third paragraph under Facilities. This removes all direction for habitat effectiveness (road density) within the Grizzly Bear Recovery Zone related to grizzly bears.

These deleted sections will be replaced with the following wording:

Objective A.1:

Manage human access within the Grizzly Bear Recovery Zone in order to help meet the goal of grizzly bear recovery.

Standard A.1.a. Adopt Yellowstone access standards when they become available. In the interim, within Bear Management Subunits (unless allowed through consultation with the USFWS): 1) do not increase open motorized access route density from the current level, 2) do not increase total motorized access route density from the current level, and 3) do not decrease amount of core area(s) from the current level (see amended Glossary for terms).

Guideline A.1.a.: Utilize the best available technology\* to analyze human access and its effects on grizzly bear in the Grizzly Bear Recovery Zone for projects increasing road or trail access or decreasing

<sup>\*</sup> It should be noted that 'best available technology' is constantly changing, with new information and techniques available periodically. The Gallatin National Forest will use the best technology on this subject that is available on the Forest, with the expertise to use it on the Forest and the database in condition to be used. At this time, this generally consists of the approved Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee Task Force Report on Grizzly Bear/Motorized Access Management (IGBC July, 1994) definitions and methods. The Forest will not postpone analyses for extensive database updates, etc.

